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ABSTRACT

This study examines the importance and use of affective teacher characteristics perceived by parents and teachers. A 22-item questionnaire, based on a 110-item survey, asked parents and teachers to rate the importance of affective teacher characteristics. The question of whether parents and teachers feel affective teacher behaviors are an important part of the classroom environment was explored. Teachers were also asked to evaluate other teachers' performance. Questions related to teacher behavior and attitudes toward such topics as the treatment of the individual child, racial and ethnic prejudice, the relationship of the pupil to school and society, and how moral values can be strengthened. The first section of this study investigates parents' evaluation of the importance of these and other topics and their judgment of the degree to which teachers demonstrate these competencies in their classroom. The second part concerns teachers' evaluation of an identical list of competencies in handling these concepts and the degree of concordance between their evaluation and that of the parents. (JD)

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PARENT-TEACHER RESPONSES TO IMPORTANCE AND USE OF AFFECTIVE TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS IN THE CLASSROOM

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The affective domain has been identified by theoreticians and researchers as a critical part of the child's total educational development. Since 1965 both theoretical and empirical research on the affective or feeling domain has increased geometrically. This increase appears to have followed parental and teacher concerns relating to drug abuse and the dehumanization of schools.[1]

Paralleling the interest in the affective domain, much has been written in the last few years about the return to basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. School districts and many teacher educators are asking teachers to concentrate on cognitive teaching behaviors. In response to these concerns, competency-based education, which gained attention with the Model Elementary Teacher Education programs in the late 1960s, has become the basis for teacher certification programs in a number of states.[2]

This movement of numerous school districts and parent organizations in the establishment of a minimal competency level in the three Rs may lead the observer to assume that both parents and teachers feel development in the affective domain is not of great importance. In regard to parental concern, evidence is available from a recent Gallup Poll Survey (October 1976)[3] in which parents with children in public school were asked to select the one quality which they judged as most important in the overall development of a child. While ability to get along with others and high moral standards (behaviors regarded as within the affective domain) were ranked third (20%)

and fourth (15%), high moral standards was the one quality parents considered to be most neglected by both the schools and parents. Parents are concerned with the schools' ineffectiveness in the areas of affective behaviors.

The question remains: Do parents and teachers feel that affective teacher behaviors are an important part of the classroom environment? One section of this study will investigate parents' evaluation of the importance of a variety of affective competencies as well as their judgement of a degree to which teachers demonstrate these competencies in their classroom behaviors. A program of affective education can only progress smoothly if teachers and parents are in substantial agreement as to the importance of various competencies. The second part of this study will concern teachers' evaluation of an identical list of competencies and will examine the degree of concordance between their evaluation and that of parents.

The Texas Education Association through a regional service center in Texas conducted a survey entitled A Framework for Crime Prevention and Drug Education in Texas.[4] The questionnaire presented 110 teacher competencies or indicators which related directly or indirectly to drug and crime prevention. For the purpose of this study, twenty-two teacher competencies which relate to the affective domain were selected from the Texas Education Agency listing of 110 teacher indicators. They were grouped into one of two categories: (1) Education and Society, and (2) Education and the Classroom.

Respondents were asked to evaluate each statement on a scale with values ranging from "1" to "5." For the evaluation of importance, the value "1" corresponded with low importance whereas "5" represented high importance, while for assessing the proportion of teachers who displayed these behaviors, "1" represented few teachers and "5" corresponded with many teachers. For each statement an average or mean score was obtained by summing over the values and dividing by the total number of responses for that statement.

A total population of two hundred parents and fourteen teachers were mailed the questionnaire. The results reported in this paper are based on the responses of seventy-six parents (N=76) and fourteen teachers (N=14).

Before we consider individual competency statements it should be noted that across-the-board affective competencies were judged highly important by both parents and teachers. For statements evaluated by parents, the overall mean score on importance is 4.26 with individual statement mean scores varying from a high of 4.69 to a low of 3.66. For teachers, the overall mean score is slightly higher, 4.34, and the range of means somewhat broader, varying from a high of 5.00 to a low of 3.57. The mean scores for all the statements are substantially above the midpoint of the value range, which is "3" (see Table 5).

In terms of assessing the proportion of teachers who display the competency behaviors, the mean scores are not only lower than those for importance but they also indicate the parents and teachers tend to disagree as to the extent to which affective competencies are demonstrated by teachers in the classroom. The overall mean score is 3.09 for parents and 3.93 for teachers; the teachers, on the average, score each statement one unit higher than do parents. The range of mean scores for individual statements reflect

the difference in the overall mean scores; for parents the scores range from a high of 3.42 to a low of 2.70 while for teachers the high and low scores are 4.50 and 3.38, respectively. Finally, the mean score for all statements grouped under Education and the Classroom is higher than that of statements grouped under Education and the Society when evaluated by both teachers and parents in terms of importance and displaying behavior.

Teacher Affective Competencies Ranked According to Importance by Parents and Teachers

Our examination of the mean scores indicates that all twenty-two affective competencies are perceived as important by both parents and teachers. This result should not be too surprising, for the competencies were chosen because of their theoretical importance for a student's total educational program. All statements were not judged to be of equal importance, however, and in order to obtain a clear indication of the importance of individual competencies relative to one another, the competency statements have been ranked according to their means and are displayed in Table 1. The teaching competencies under each sub-heading are arranged by relative rank among all twenty-two statements as rated by parents. The teachers' ranking of each statement is displayed in the right-hand column.

A comparison of teacher and parent rankings for each statement suggests that the two groups agree substantially as to the relative importance of the teaching competencies (rank order correlation = .81, $p < .001$). Because of the similarity of rankings many of the comments concerning patterns of interaction among the competency statements apply to both the parent and teacher rankings; therefore, we will first discuss

some of the points of disagreement between the two rankings and then examine the data for a general pattern as to the types of teaching competencies which received high rankings or, conversely, low rankings.

Briefly, the greatest differences between teacher and parent rankings occur among statements relating to Education and the Classroom. Teachers rank the competency related to conducting decision-making activities second in importance while parents assigned it to position eight, a difference in rank of six. Greater disagreement, however, exists in relation to students' involvement in classroom activities. Teachers rank student participation in the planning, instructing, and evaluating of classroom experiences next to last (rank 21) whereas parents rank student participation among the middle ranks (rank 11.5).

For statements relating to Education and Society, the greatest differences in ranks focus on the statements pertaining to accepting cultural differences (df = 5)* and identifying prejudices and taboos of the environment (df = 5.5); in each case parents rank these competencies as less important than do teachers.

The nature of the competencies associated with these rather large differences in rank, may reflect areas of concern to which one group is more sensitive than the other or to a basic value conflict as to worth of the concerned teaching competencies. In the case of differences relating to decision-making competencies, the high rank which teachers gave to the conducting decision-making activities competency was most likely influenced by the great emphasis placed on such activities in pedagogic training, an emphasis to which parents have not been subjected. The low rank teachers accorded to students' participation in planning and

*(df = difference in rank)

evaluation of classroom activities (the most realistic application of decision-making activities), however, suggests that they are highly sensitive to sharing their traditional prerogative of classroom authority with students. Since parents would not be directly affected if students were to more actively participate in classroom decisions, they rate the competency much higher than teachers and not far below that of its complementary competency, conducting decision-making activities.

On the other hand, the large differences between teacher and parent ranking of the competencies relating to accepting cultural differences and identifying prejudices and taboos of the environment may suggest an area of special concern for parents. Interestingly, while both parents and teachers judge it important to respond to ethnics as individuals (ranks 3 and 1, respectively) parents rank much lower than teachers the acceptance of cultural differences and the identification of prejudices. It appears they are suggesting that teachers should treat ethnics fairly, but teachers should not use the classroom as a forum to emphasize cultural differences. The large difference between parents' rank of the teaching competency facilitating open communication (rank 7) and the competency facilitating open discussion of controversies (rank 18.5) supports our contention that parents question the use of the classroom as a sounding board for today's societal issues.

Having established that parents and teachers are in general agreement as to the relative importance of the teaching competencies, we may now ask "What type of competencies are considered more important?" Apparently, competencies which relate to the classroom are considered more important than those concerned with society. For parents, nine of the competency

statements which rank in the top ten relate to classroom concerns, while for teachers the proportion is eight out of ten statements. The themes of these statements—for example: "reinforces positive achievements," "displays behavior which is empathic, acceptant, and supportive," "models behavior expected from students"—identify competencies which relate directly to a student's ability to adjust successfully to the demands of the immediate school environment.

Conversely, competencies which refer to individuals and their adjustment to the larger society beyond the school—for example, such competencies as understanding the democratic process, listing appropriate alternatives of situation, and revealing pressures on student values and actions—are mostly placed in the lower half of the ranking hierarchy. While reminding the reader that all the competencies were rated as important, nevertheless, the competencies which relate to broad social concerns are judged as less important than those which relate more directly to the successful functioning of individuals in the school environment.

Although we have observed that teachers and parents agree as to the relative importance of the teaching competencies, it is plausible that among parents such background variables as age of respondents, socioeconomic level, and/or general political orientation may affect an individual's evaluation of the competencies. Such is not the case for this study. Neither the age of the parent, the level of family income, nor the respondent's political orientation (conservative-liberal) are systematically associated with the evaluation of the competency statements. We might add that such results are not unexpected, given the fact that parents were somewhat self-selected in the sense that they chose a parochial education for their children and therefore are likely to share the similar views on education.

Parent and Teacher Evaluations of Teachers' Demonstration of Affective Behaviors

Both parents and teachers were asked to judge the proportion of teachers who demonstrate each of the affective competencies in their classroom behavior. Since there is so little contact between parents and the schools or peer observation of classroom activities among teachers, the evaluations are necessarily quite subjective. Although such opinions may be very impressionistic, they do represent concerns from which parents and teachers judge the overall effectiveness of schools, and therefore such information should be of interest to parents, teachers and teacher educators.

As was noted above, teachers rated their fellow teachers on displaying affective behaviors significantly higher than did parents. The teachers' overall average score for all 22 competencies is 3.93 with individual statement means varying from a high of 4.50 to a low of 3.38, while the parents' overall average score is almost one unit less at 3.09 with statement means ranging from a high of 3.42 to a low of 2.70. Given that the overall mean score for both parents and teachers is greater than the scale midpoint, three, it appears that both groups are satisfied with the teachers' performance in the competency areas examined in the questionnaire. The parents' lower average score may indicate they question teachers' effectiveness in these areas or perhaps more plausible, the low average reflects a reluctance on the part of parents to project a quality to "many" teachers when in fact they have had limited contact with only a few teachers.

In addition to mean scores, it is of interest to examine the degree to which the ranks of affective competencies for importance and displaying behavior agree with one another. If those competencies which are high in importance are also ranked high in terms of the proportion of teachers who

display that competency behavior, then it is likely that the rating group, either parents or teachers, is satisfied with the schools' efforts in promoting the set of competencies.

Teachers' Evaluation of Fellow Teachers' Classroom Behavior

Teachers' ranking of the competencies by displaying behavior strongly agrees with their ranking by importance ($R_{sp} = .88$, $p < .001$; see Table 2). It appears then that teachers judge the classroom behaviors of teachers to be adequately displayed in classroom activities in direct proportion to each behavior's importance in the educative process. There are, however, some interesting differences in rank. Three competencies—(1) provides opportunities for successful experiences, (2) individual differences handled non-judgementally, and (3) behavior empathic, acceptant, supportive—are ranked in terms of displaying behavior approximately five positions below their rank by importance. Apparently, teachers question whether their colleagues handle students' individual differences in a personal, supportive, rewarding manner. We should note that for teachers, there is a natural conflict between applying universalistic criteria for dealing fairly with all students and treating each student in an individualistic, personal manner. Our data suggest that teachers tend to stress those activities which treat most students alike.

For those competencies relating to Education and Society, nine out of eleven have a higher rank on displaying behavior than on importance, although in most cases the differences are quite small. Skills which deal with understanding value differ, knowing pressures on student decisions, and promoting the democratic process are ranked approximately five ranks above

their corresponding ranks by importance. These skills are all rather basic skills which are part of the generic competency behaviors for all teachers, and therefore they received a high rank in displaying behavior but were given less attention when evaluated in terms of importance.

Parents' Evaluation of Teachers' Classroom Behavior

There is less agreement between parents' ranking of competencies by importance and teachers' displaying behavior than was the case for teachers (R_{sp} = .67, $p < .001$; see Table 3). As was the case with teachers, there is greater agreement in ranks among competencies which relate to Education and the Classroom than among those concerning Education and the Society. This may be due to parents' judging societal competencies as relatively unimportant but at the same time they perceive most teachers as demonstrating these competencies in their classroom behaviors.

For competencies relating to Education and the Classroom, the discrepancies between the rankings for statements concerned with a teacher's personal individualistic approach to students, which was noted in the teachers' data, is again present. The rankings for displaying behavior is less than that for importance not only for the classroom competencies of "providing opportunities for successful experiences," "responding to ethnics as individuals," and "handling individual differences non-judgementally" but also for the societal competencies of "understanding individual and group values differ" and "knowing pressures of others on student decisions." The common theme which ties these competencies together is that of skills and knowledge pertaining to working with students in a more individualistic personal manner. Both parents and teachers, therefore, rank teachers'

behavior in this area below that of other competencies which are considered less important. Competencies which are concerned with developing in teachers a greater awareness of the individual differences in students may need to be stressed in Teacher Training programs.

For competencies listed under Education and the Society, other than the statements relating to understanding values differ and knowing pressures of others on student decisions, large difference in rankings are a result of a higher ranking for teachers' demonstrated behavior than for importance. In other words, parents rank such competencies as "promotes understanding of democratic process," "accepts cultural and subcultural differences," and "knows impact and pattern of social change" as relatively unimportant but, at the same time, they judge that most teachers do display such competencies in their classroom behaviors.

Comparison of Parent and Teacher Ranking of Displaying Behavior

Parents and teachers are in basic agreement as to the overall ranking of the twenty-two competencies (R_{sp} = .49, $p < .01$), but there is less agreement concerning displaying behavior than there was in regard to importance of competencies. (See Table 4.)

For all but three of the classroom competencies—"conducts decision-making activities," "responds to ethnics as individuals," and "facilitates open discussion of controversies"—parents give a higher rank to the competencies than do teachers; the largest differences between rankings relate to empathic, acceptant, supportive behavior (df = 6) and student participation in classroom planning and evaluation (df = 7). Conversely, teachers view their colleagues as engaging in more open discussion of controversies

than do parents. Overall, however, teachers and parents agree as to the behavior teachers displayed in the classroom.

Turning to the competencies which concern education and society, we note that those competencies which are ranked substantially lower by parents than by teachers are those which relate to values, attitudes, or beliefs which directly concern the quality of student-teacher or student-student interaction both in and out of school. Parents compared to teachers judge that teachers are less likely to be aware of the pressures of others on student decisions (df = 11.5), to reveal pressures on students' values and actions (df = 5), to understand values differ among individuals and groups (df = 15) and to identify the prejudices and taboos of the environment (df = 11). Conversely, teacher behaviors which concern a broader range of social and political values—e.g., facilitating analysis of social trends and differentiation of political systems—were ranked higher by parents than by teachers.

This study identifies some important differences between parent and teacher perceptions of the importance and use of affective teacher competencies. Although the "generalizability" of this study is limited by the sample size, the implications for further studies into parent teacher perceptions need to be continued. The validity of the Education and the Classroom and Education and Society categories requires additional replication.

The data derived from this and other studies should be utilized by educational decision makers to examine the goals and objectives for our schools.

TABLE 1--Teacher competencies ranked according to importance by teachers and parents.

	EDUCATION AND THE CLASSROOM	PARENT	TEACHER
Q17.	Identifies and reinforces positive acheivements	1	3.5
Q13.	Provides opportunities for successful experiences	2	6
Q09.	Responds to ethnics as individuals	3	1
Q21.	Behavior empathic, acceptant, supportive	4	6
Q15.	Helps students explore, develop interests	5	6
Q11.	Models behavior expected from students	6	3.5
Q23.	Facilitates open communication	7	10
Q43.	Conducts decision-making activities	8	2
Q19.	Individual differences handled non-judgmentally	9	12
Q31.	Students participate: planning, evaluating	11.5	21
Q25.	Facilitates open discussion of controversies	18.5	14.5
	EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY		
Q01.	Understands values differ: individual, group	10	8
Q35.	Knows pressures of others on student decisions	11.5	11
Q27.	Promotes understanding of democratic process	13	14.5
Q07.	Accepts cultural and subcultural differences	14	9
Q33.	Explores societal values: development, change	15	19.5
Q05.	Lists appropriate alternatives of situation	16	16.5
Q29.	Facilitates differentiation: political systems	17	22
Q03.	Identifies prejudices, taboos of environment	18.5	13
Q39.	Knows impact and pattern of social change	20	16.5
Q37.	Reveals pressures on student values, actions	21	18
Q41.	Facilitates analysis of social trends	22	19.5

TABLE 2--Teacher competencies ranked according to importance and displaying behavior by teachers.

	EDUCATION AND THE CLASSROOM	IMPORTANCE	DISPLAYING BEHAVIOR
Q09.	Responds to ethnics as individuals	1	2
Q43.	Conducts decision-making activities	2	1
Q11.	Models behavior expected from students	3.5	4
Q17.	Identifies and reinforces positive achievements	3.5	4
Q13.	Provides opportunities for successful experiences	6	11
Q15.	Helps students explore, develop interests	6	8
Q21.	Behavior empathic, acceptant, supportive	6	11
Q23.	Facilitates open communication	10	13.5
Q19.	Individual differences handled non-judgmentally	12	18.5
Q25.	Facilitates open discussion of controversies	14.5	13.5
Q31.	Students participate: planning, evaluating	21	20
	EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY		
Q01.	Understands values differ: individual, group	8	4
Q07.	Accepts cultural and subcultural differences	9	7
Q35.	Knows pressures of others on student decisions	11	6
Q03.	Identifies prejudices, taboos of environment	13	11
Q27.	Promotes understanding of democratic process	14.5	9
Q05.	Lists appropriate alternatives of situation	16.5	15.5
Q39.	Knows impact and pattern of social change	16.5	15.5
Q37.	Reveals pressures on student values, actions	18	17
Q33.	Explores societal values: development, change	19.5	18.5
Q41.	Facilitates analysis of social trends	19.5	21
Q29.	Facilitates differentiation: political systems	22	22

TABLE 3--Teacher competencies ranked according to importance and displaying behavior by parents.

	EDUCATION AND THE CLASSROOM	IMPORTANCE	DISPLAYING BEHAVIOR
Q17.	Identifies and reinforces positive achievements	1	1
Q13.	Provides opportunities for successful experiences	2	8
Q09.	Responds to ethnics as individuals	3	9
Q21.	Behavior empathic, acceptant, supportive	4	5
Q15.	Helps students explore, develop interests	5	7
Q11.	Models behavior expected from students	6	2
Q23.	Facilitates open communication	7	10
Q43.	Conducts decision-making activities	8	4
Q19.	Individual differences handled non-judgmentally	9	14
Q31.	Students participate: planning, evaluating	11.5	13
Q25.	Facilitates open discussion of controversies	18.5	20
	EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY		
Q01.	Understands values differ: individual, group	10	19
Q35.	Knows pressures of others on student decisions	11.5	17.5
Q27.	Promotes understanding of democratic process	13	6
Q07.	Accepts cultural and subcultural differences	14	3
Q33.	Explores societal values: development, change	15	17.5
Q05.	Lists appropriate alternatives of situation	16	15
Q29.	Facilitates differentiation: politaical systems	17	11
Q03.	Identifies prejudices, taboos of environment	18.5	21
Q39.	Knows impact and pattern of social change	20	12
Q37.	Reveals pressures on student values, actions	21	22
Q41.	Facilitates analysis of social trends	22	16

TABLE 4--Teacher competencies ranked by teachers and parents, according to displaying behavior.

	EDUCATION AND THE CLASSROOM	PARENT	TEACHER
Q17.	Identifies and reinforces positive achievements	1	4
Q11.	Models behavior expected from students	2	4
Q43.	Conducts decision-making activities	4	11
Q21.	Behavior empathic, acceptant, supportive	5	11
Q15.	Helps student explore, develop interests	7	8
Q13.	Provides opportunities for successful experiences	8	11
Q09.	Responds to ethnics as individuals	9	12
Q23.	Facilitates open communication	10	13.5
Q31.	Students participate: planning, evaluating	13	20
Q19.	Individual differences handled non-judgmentally	14	18.5
Q25.	Facilitates open discussion of controversies	20	13.5
	EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY		
Q07.	Accepts cultural and subcultural differences	3	7
Q27.	Promotes understanding of democratic process	6	9
Q29.	Facilitates differentiation: political systems	11	22
Q39.	Knows impact and pattern of social change	12	15.5
Q05.	Lists appropriate alternatives of situation	15	15.5
Q41.	Facilitates analysis of social trends	16	21
Q35.	Knows pressure of others on student decisions	17.5	6
Q33.	Explores societal values: development, change	17.5	18.5
Q01.	Understands values differ: individual, group	19	4
Q03.	Identifies prejudices, taboos of environment	21	11
Q37.	Reveals pressures on student values, actions	22	17

TABLE 5--Mean scores for 22 teacher affective competencies for importance and displaying behavior by parents and teachers.

	Parents Importance	Parents Displaying Behavior	Teachers Importance	Teachers Displaying Behavior
EDUCATION AND THE CLASSROOM				
Q17. The teacher is able to identify and reinforce positive student achievement.	4.69	3.42	4.85	4.2[illegible]
Q13. The teacher is able to provide opportunities for successful school experiences which develop a positive pupil self-image.	4.61	3.19	4.71	3.92
Q09. The teacher responds to students from different cultural or ethnic groups as individuals and not as sterotyped group members.	4.60	3.18	5.00	4.42
Q21. The teacher is able to exhibit behavior in the classroom which is generally empathic, positively reinforcing, acceptant, and generally learner supportive.	4.58	3.23	4.71	3.92
Q15. The teacher is able to help students explore and develop their interests.	4.55	3.20	4.71	4.00
Q11. The teacher is able to model the behaviors which he/she expects of students.	4.52	3.38	4.85	4.28
Q23. The teacher has knowledge of and is able to implement methods for facilitating open communication and eliminating barriers to effective communication.	4.46	3.13	4.42	3.85
Q43. The teacher is able to conduct activities which require decision-making by students.	4.43	3.25	4.92	4.50
Q19. The teacher is able to deal openly with individual differences in a non-judgmental manner.	4.42	2.98	4.35	3.64
Q31. The teacher is able to design and implement strategies which give students responsibility in planning their own learning, in participating in instruction, and in evaluating their own progress.	4.32	3.04	3.57	3.50

	Parents Importance	Parents Displaying Behavior	Teachers Importance	Teachers Displaying Behavior
Q25. The teacher is able to conduct discussions of controversial issues and facilitate students' free expression of opinions.	4.02	2.92	4.21	3.85
EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY				
Q01. The teacher is able to demonstrate an understanding that values may differ from individual to individual, within a group, and from group to group.	4.33	2.94	4.57	4.28
Q35. The teacher has knowledge of the effects of individual, family, and peer pressure upon student decisions.	4.32	2.95	4.38	4.23
Q27. The teacher is able to help students understand the democratic process and their participation in that process.	4.17	3.21	4.21	4.00
Q07. The teacher accepts cultural and sub-cultural differences.	4.16	3.33	4.50	4.21
Q33. The teacher is able to conduct learning experiences in which students explore the origins and development of values, attitudes and beliefs, how they change, and the impact they have on human relationships.	4.09	2.95	3.85	3.64
Q05. The teacher is able to list alternatives appropriate to a particular life situation.	4.06	2.97	4.07	3.78
Q29. The teacher is able to help students differentiate between democratic processes and other processes (authoritarian, facist, etc.)	4.05	3.11	3.38	3.38
Q03. The teacher is able to identify prejudices, inconsistencies, and taboos of personal environment and culture.	4.02	2.91	4.30	3.92
Q39. The teacher has knowledge of patterns of change in society and the impact of change upon the individual.	3.95	3.06	4.07	3.78

	Parents Importance	Parents Displaying Behavior	Teachers Importance	Teachers Displaying Behavior
Q37. The teacher is able to conduct activities in which individual, peer and other pressure on the student's values, actions, and decisions are.	3.75	2.70	4.00	3.76
Q41. The teacher is able to facilitate student analysis and evaluation of current trends in our changing society.	3.66	2.96	3.85	3.42

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